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C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 001152

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DEPT FOR WHA/CAR, IO/UNP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [GT](#) [VZ](#) [TD](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DEMARCHES NEW T&T FM ON VENEZUELA'S
UNSC CANDIDACY

REF: STATE 162359

Classified By: ADSM, John Ries for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) During an October 3 courtesy call on new T&T Foreign Minister Arnold Piggott to congratulate him on his appointment, the Ambassador raised Venezuela,s candidacy for the 2007/2008 Latin American and Caribbean non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, drawing on the talking points in State 162359. Noting that Caricom countries (including T&T) have given Guatemala,s border dispute with Belize as partial explanation of their support for Venezuela,s candidacy, the Ambassador reminded Piggott that Venezuela,s border dispute with Guyana has potentially more harmful consequences for Guyana than the Guatemala/Belize dispute has for Belize. He also emphasized that, in pursuing his Pertocaribe initiative, Chavez had taken no account of T&T,s energy-related interests. Finally, the Ambassador wondered why a man who thinks the UN system has collapsed and who characterizes the organization as &worthless8 would be at all interested in a Security Council Seat. Piggott listened to the arguments, said he would take on board the Ambassador,s request for a reconsideration of T&T,s support for Venezuela, and undertook to communicate his response to the Ambassador prior to the October 16 vote.

¶2. (C) When the Ambassador told Piggott that Article 98-related restrictions had just been lifted from T&T and that T&T was now authorized to receive International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding, Piggott acknowledged the news but was clearly unaware of it in advance of the meeting. He asked what time commitment was involved in IMET courses, and said the UK and Canada had also made available such training to T&T.

¶3. (U) In response to a general question by Piggott about developments on the visa front, the Ambassador asked Piggott to remind his staff in Port of Spain and at the embassy in Washington to give the State Department maximum possible notice of any planned travel to the U.S. by T&T officials. Such notice would help avoid the kind of treatment received recently at Kennedy Airport by the Venezuelan Foreign Minister who had not requested any airport courtesies in advance of his trip.

¶4. (U) The Ambassador concluded the meeting by noting that he is now the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Port of Spain. He told Piggott that, from time to time, he will likely want to discuss with him the collective wishes, if any, of his fellow Heads of Missions and offered to ease Piggott,s task by calling a &get acquainted8 meeting for him with all the resident Heads of Missions. Piggott appreciated the offer

but said he would probably have to meet and greet them individually.

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Piggott is clearly still settling into his portfolio and has not received much assistance from Margaret Rousseau, his Americas Desk Director, who sat in on the meeting but who has herself been on the job for less than a month. END COMMENT.
AUSTIN